

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Abbott, Kiko, and Dubester nominations en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 292.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Brenda Burman, of Arizona, to be Commissioner of Reclamation.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Burman nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO JACKIE DOUGAN JACKSON

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in a few days, Americans will celebrate Thanksgiving, a holiday that is filled with meaning and memories and, if we are lucky, sumptuous meals shared with family and friends.

Thanksgiving began as America's national harvest festival, a day to give thanks for our rich and fertile land and the great bounty of food it produces.

On this long Thanksgiving weekend, I plan to spend a few hours reading the latest book from one of my favorite friends whose works capture in loving detail life on her family's Wisconsin dairy farm, but even more, the rock-solid values that sustained her family and her life.

The book is called "The Round Barn: Biography of an American Farm." As one reviewer wrote, reading it "is like sitting on the porch of an early 20th century dairy farm and watching an era in American history pass right before your eyes."

The Round Barn books—there are three of them now—are the creations of Jackie Dougan Jackson, a novelist, poet, professor, mentor to generations of writers, and one of the best-loved residents in my hometown of Springfield, IL.

She lives in a big, old home in Springfield which, legend has it, was once visited by another master storyteller, Abraham Lincoln.

Loretta and I are lucky to count Jackie as a dear friend of many years. She is a kind, creative soul who never fails to reach out to help others. At the age of 89, she is still filled with energy, empathy and curiosity about nearly everything.

The Round Barn books keep a promise that Jackie made to her grandfather W.J. Dougan when she was just 15 years old. She vowed then that one day she would write a history of the dairy farm that W.J. had founded in 1906, the farm on which three generations of Jackie's family lived and worked.

Jackie Jackson throws open the Round Barn doors at the Dougan family farm to tell us an American story. She gives us a rich history of farm life at the mercy of the forces of science and the market but grounded in rock-solid Midwestern values.

Some of those values were painted onto the silo of the family's round barn. W.J. titled the list "Aims for the Farm." They were: "#1. Good Crops; #2. Proper Storage; #3. Profitable Live Stock; #4. A Stable Market"—and most important of all—"#5. Life as Well as a Living."

W.J. Dougan was a deeply spiritual man and a hard worker. He struggled for years to put himself through college and became a Methodist minister, but encroaching deafness forced him to give up the religious life he loved.

In 1906, he bought a dairy farm near Beloit, WI.

The Round Barn was built in 1911. W.J. chose the unusual shape because he believed that a barn braced on a central concrete pillar was cheaper to build, more efficient for a dairy operation, and less likely to blow away in a tornado. The Round Barn quickly became a county landmark.

W.J. marketed himself as "the Babies Milk Man," and he succeeded through

hard work, dedication to his customers and community, and an unusual talent for spotting and adopting cutting-edge advances in agriculture. In 1925, he was named a "Master Farmer" by a prestigious agricultural organization, one of only 23 Midwestern farmers so honored.

Even so, the Great Depression, which destroyed so many family farms and businesses, nearly wiped out the Dougan Guernsey Dairy Farm. In 1930, bankruptcy papers were drawn up but never filed.

Jackie was born in 1928, the year before the Great Depression, one of four children of W.J.'s son Ronald and Ronald's wife, Eunice.

Jackie was a natural born writer, a prodigy. When she was 8 she wrote a short story that took first prize in a Beloit citywide contest. Her first novel was serialized in the Galesburg Post in Illinois when she was 10.

She majored in classics at Beloit College, married, and then moved with her new husband to Ann Arbor, where they both earned master's degrees.

The couple had four daughters. Jackie would go on to earn a doctorate in Latin from the University of Wisconsin.

She was teaching writing at Kent State University in Ohio in 1967 when her father suffered a heart attack. Jackie went home and sat at his hospital bedside for weeks as he recounted stories of life on the family farm.

Back in Ohio after her father's recovery, Jackie became aware of a deep longing within her to reconnect with her rural beginnings. As she described it in one of her Round Barn books:

There has been another clock within her. She didn't set it nor place it there. It's been geared not to hours but to cycles; the daily procession of milking and bottling, feeding and cleaning the yearly procession of planting, cultivating, harvesting. It's been set to sun, moon, health, cold, wet dry. But now if there's a heavy spring freeze, she puts on a coat without sensing the loss of crisp that might result from too-late planting. If the sky lowers black, she takes an umbrella without feeling the sway of the hay wagon racing to reach the barn before the cloudburst. Her dailiness is not this class, that lecture, the next trip to the stacks. . . . It was the ground she'd stood on, the air she'd breathed. She had no special moment, no epiphany to explain the realization of loss that came over her. She only knows that something elemental is gone and has been gone for some time. That it's probably irretrievable, unless she changes the path she's treading.

So that is what she did. Jackie Jackson changed her life's path. She moved to Springfield, IL, and accepted a position teaching literature and writing at an innovative university that was just opening, Sangamon State University, now the University of Illinois at Springfield.

For years, she had been collecting stories and recollections about the Round Barn, her family, the dairy's customers, and the townspeople. Her trove of tales included her own notebooks, stretching back to when she was

8, the stories her father had told her from his hospital bed, letters and notes left by her grandfather, and much more.

She became a sort of detective, finding more letters tucked into framed pictures, stuck to the attic floor in the old family home all sorts of unexpected places. Each letter or scrap of paper became a piece of the family puzzle.

In 1976, she began to fashion the notes and letters into the first Round Barn book. The book published this month, "The Round Barn: Biography of an American Farm" is the fulfillment of her promise to her grandfather, her magnum opus, a detailed and loving portrait of a way of life that no longer exists.

The Dougan Guernsey Dairy Farm ceased operating in 1967, just as agribusiness and large corporate farms were beginning to redefine American farming.

In 1979, the Round Barn was added to the National Registry of Historic Places.

By 2012, the dilapidated old structure had become a safety hazard, and it was torn down, but thanks to Jackie Jackson's beautifully detailed biography of her family's farm and the people who lived and worked there, generations from now readers will still be able to visit the magical world of the Round Barn.

As this Thanksgiving Day, this American harvest festival, approaches, I am thankful for the Round Barn books that capture a bygone day of American farming like holograms, and Loretta and I are grateful to our friend Jackie for giving the world such a gift.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 277, on the nomination of Joseph Otting, of Nevada, to be Comptroller of the Currency. Had I been present, I would have voted nay.

Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 278, on the motion to invoke cloture on Donald C. Coggins, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States district judge for the District of South Carolina. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 279, on the motion to invoke cloture on Dabney Langhorne Friedrich, of California, to be United States district judge for the District of Columbia. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

Mr. President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 280, on the nomination of Donald C. Coggins, Jr., of South Carolina, to be United States district judge for the District of South Carolina. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.●

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for the votes on confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 300, the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 313, the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 314, and the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 313.

On vote No. 277, had I been present, I would have voted nay on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 300.

On vote No. 278, had I been present, I would have voted yea on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 313.

On Vote No. 279, had I been present, I would have voted yea on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 314.

On Vote No. 280, had I been present, I would have voted yea on the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 313.●

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I would like to review for the Senate the status of appropriations for fiscal year 2018.

The Appropriations Committee has marked up 8 of the 12 regular appropriations bills for this fiscal year. The committee has also processed two supplemental appropriations bills and one continuing resolution.

We have little time to finalize the regular appropriations bills and to consider additional supplemental appropriations requests for defense and for natural disaster recovery.

We need a new budget deal to finish our work. Congress and the administration must reach agreement on acceptable top-line funding levels for defense and nondefense programs.

At the funding cap currently in law, the Appropriations Committee would be hard-pressed to write a 2018 Defense bill that fully meets our national security needs or reflects the priorities of the Senate.

The current continuing resolution expires on December 8. We cannot afford to extend that CR into next year.

A budget agreement is necessary for the Senate to approve responsible appropriations legislation. I urge all parties to those negotiations to redouble their efforts to reach agreement.

WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims commemorates the millions of people killed and injured on the world's roads. It is also a day to thank emergency services for their role in saving lives; to reflect on the impact of road deaths on families and communities; and to draw attention to the need for improved legislation, awareness, infrastructure, technology, and post-crash responses to save more families from the tragedy of losing a loved one.

The theme of this year's World Day of Remembrance is "2020 Target: Reduce Road Fatalities and Serious Injuries by 50%." It refers to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 3.6 which calls on governments and their stakeholders, including NGOs and private citizens, to address the personal, medical, and financial burden that road deaths and injuries cause; 1.25 million people die from road crashes every year, and tens of millions are seriously injured. Road traffic crashes are the No. 1 killer of young people aged 15 to 29 and the eighth leading cause of death among all people worldwide.

Rochelle Sobel, president of the Association for Safe International Road Travel, said, "The World Day of Remembrance is an important opportunity to stand together with the global community to commemorate road victims and call for an end to the crisis on our roads. No one should have to go through the needless, preventable loss of a child, a brother, a mother, a friend, killed in a road traffic crash. This year's theme to reduce the number of deaths by 50% by 2020, reminds us of the need to drive responsibly, educate our children, and advocate with our governments to implement and enforce policies that will protect road users and prevent more families from suffering the pain of losing a loved one on the road."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO PETTY OFFICER SECOND CLASS TERENCE PARSONS

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor PO2 Terence Parsons of Genesee, ID, whom the United Service Organization, USO has recognized as the USO's Sailor of the Year for 2017.

Terence Parsons took action to assist two motorists involved in car accidents and marines involved in a mass casualty situation. The USO explained, "Displaying unselfish devotion and great heroism, Terence Parsons, a Navy corpsman, put himself in harm's way to assist members of the community. While off duty on two separate occasions, he witnessed car accidents that caused potentially life-threatening injuries to the victims involved. With little thought of his own safety, Parsons responded by providing life-saving treatment." The USO further commended Terence Parsons for his response to a mass casualty event of 18 marines suffering multiple injuries sustained during U.S.S. *Oak Hill* U.S.S. *Kearsarge* amphibious warfare qualifications. Terence Parsons' quick action was pivotal in preventing further injury and saved numerous lives.

Terence joined the U.S. Navy in 2011 and credits the values, including a respect for hard work and teamwork, he obtained growing up in Genesee and the support of his family, command and friends with enabling his military success. Terence Parsons has also received many other recognitions for his